

Application No. 09/735,762
Filed: December 13, 2000
Group Art Unit: 1746

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

1. - 11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) A method of operating a dry-cleaning system, comprising:

disposing substrates to be dry-cleaned into a cleaning vessel;

evacuating air and water vapor from the interior of the cleaning vessel to the atmosphere;

equalizing the pressure between a first storage vessel containing a dry-cleaning medium and the cleaning vessel;

conveying the dry-cleaning medium from a second storage vessel to the cleaning vessel;

agitating the substrates in the cleaning vessel;

conveying liquid dry-cleaning medium from the cleaning vessel to the second storage vessel;

evacuating gaseous dry-cleaning medium from the cleaning vessel to the first storage vessel; and

raising the cleaning vessel internal pressure to atmospheric pressure by admitting air.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein equalizing the pressure comprises selectively operating a compressor and valves associated with conduits interconnecting the first storage vessel and the cleaning vessel.


14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein conveying the dry-cleaning medium comprises selectively operating a compressor and

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valves associated with conduits interconnecting the second storage vessel and the cleaning vessel.

15. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein conveying liquid dry-cleaning medium comprises selectively operating a compressor and valves associated with conduits interconnecting the second storage vessel and the cleaning vessel.

16. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein evacuating gaseous dry-cleaning medium comprises selectively operating a compressor and valves associated with conduits interconnecting the first storage vessel and the cleaning vessel.

 17. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein agitating comprises agitating the substrates in the cleaning vessel through rotation of a rotatable basket disposed within the cleaning vessel.

18. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein evacuating gaseous dry-cleaning medium further comprises conducting the gaseous dry-cleaning medium through a heat exchanging conduit disposed within the cleaning vessel.

19. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein evacuating gaseous dry-cleaning medium further comprises conducting the gaseous dry-cleaning medium through an aperture into a lower portion of the first storage vessel to enable heat transfer from the gaseous dry-cleaning medium to dry-cleaning medium already disposed in the first storage vessel.

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20. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein said first storage vessel is maintained at a temperature below that of the second storage vessel.

21. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein said method further comprises the step of heating the second storage vessel with a trim heater.

b2 22. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein said method further comprises the step of cooling the first storage vessel and contents thereof with a cooling element.

23. (New) The method of claim 12, wherein said dry-cleaning medium is liquid carbon dioxide.